

Illecebrous by The_Readers_Muse

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Summary:

The terrible part was for the longest time he thought it was Joyce.

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Author's Note:

- For [caryldixonandgrimes](#).

Disclaimer: I don't own Netflix's "Stranger Things." Everything belongs to whoever owns them, my wishful thinking aside.

Authors Note #1: In this story, Hopper is a Sentinel: (person with enhanced senses) And Jonathan is his Guide: (a person who helps a Sentinel control their gifts and keep them from 'zoning' or hyper-focusing on one sense and thus vulnerable.) The connection or bond between a Sentinel and Guide is a soul deep and almost spiritual thing that is generally considered pre-destined. Much like the soul-bond/one-love trope. *In this version Sentinels do come online before they meet their Guide - the person best suited to help them balance these abilities – essentially the other half of their soul. There is also a Guide shortage, meaning a Sentinel could live their entire life without meeting their perfect Guide. Hopper has lived a good portion of his adult life as a Sentinel without a Guide. Sentinels and Guides generally present as such after they are at least 20 years of age, so this story takes place after Jonathan comes home for summer from university.

Disclaimer:sentinel/guide au, Sentinel!Hopper, Guide!Jonathan, adult language, mild sexual content, age gap, aged-up Jonathan, post series, mild animal traits/behaviors.

The terrible part was for the longest time he thought it was Joyce. That it was *Joyce* who was centering him somehow. Who made him feel more or less stable. Maybe not in a Guide sort of way, but a human one. Enough to keep him running on all cylinders - enough to keep the Sentinel in him from completely starving. Just- *enough*.

He didn't expect anything more.

He never had.

Everyone knew there were more Sentinels than there were Guides.

He figured if he hadn't found his by now, being on his own and edging towards having at least one foot in the grave, it wasn't meant to be. It was just the way things were and he was a fool to have ever hoped for different. Life wasn't like the god damned movies. He'd learned that much a long time ago. The happy endings were few and far between. They happened just enough so you didn't give up on living completely.

Truth be told, it hadn't effected much. He'd never been particularly greedy that way. You had to be ambitious to be greedy. And that wasn't who he was anymore. Maybe he'd never been. Maybe losing Sarah had given him an out to just tuck his tail between his legs and go back to something comfortable – something easy. Either way, he was gettin' too damn old to be chasin' tail when he had little or nothin' to offer.

Then Jonathan came back from university for the summer - tall, fillin' out and freshly twenty-something - and all his figurin' went straight to hell.

He'd never been a hundred percent on the whole '*your Sentinel will know*' bullcrap. He didn't know an honest man who was. But the moment he'd slouched inside, tugging off his hat and smoothing his hair as Joyce yelled a greeting from the kitchen - elbow deep in dirty dishes - he nearly walked right into a god damned wall.

The whole house was saturated in it. A familiar scent that'd gone and matured on him when he wasn't paying attention. Spidering out to soothe his senses in a way he'd never experienced. If his sensitivity was a broken, screaming radio, for the first time in over twenty years the knobs had abruptly readjusted back to normal. Easing the decades long headache he'd been nursing and replacing it with something that curled his toes like pleasure. Whispering '*yes, this*' right through his damn bloodstream as he closed his eyes and wavered through it.

Guide.

"You okay, Hop?" Joyce called from the kitchen. "I'll put on some coffee. I think there's some muffins left in the tin if the boys didn't eat them all."

He blinked. Something in his brain more or less breaking down completely when the bathroom door opened down the hall and a rush of shower-steam hazed out. Unable or unwilling to look away as Jonathan stepped out with just a towel around his waist. A mess of long lean lines and maybe even some muscle to replace the sharp teenage angles as the kid looked up through the strings of his hair at him like he *knew*.

He swallowed hard, nearly choking on a sudden mouthful of saliva.

Because Jonathan's eyes were dark.

They'd always been dark, but this was something more.

Because now the kid was curling his toes in the throw-rug that hid the scorch-marked carpet. Wafting a scent that defied description as he took a small step towards him. Something rich and fire-cracker soft as he inhaled reflectively. Taking in as much as he could without choking as his mouth tarted dry. Shriveling with the absence of moisture as he tried and failed to make any damn sense of it. Chest rumbling with an answering growl as the kid just fucking *crooned* at him. Letting go of a bunch of soft little Guide sounds that settled into the cracks and dusty corners like they'd been made to fill them and were aiming to stay.

"Sheriff?"

It was that one, stupidly unsteady word that kicked some brains back into him. Realizing that somewhere along line he'd stepped forward, one hand clenched around empty air as every part of him tried to *reach*. Realizing that Jonathan's eyes had gone wide. Pupils blown as the soothing hum that'd been building between them threatened to change everything. And that Joyce was watching them from the kitchen door - mouth open, saying words, wet hands dripping soapy tears across the peeling linoleum. That-

Christ, what the hell was he doing?

He turned on his heel and banged out the screen door. Rusty hinges like knives to the brain as he did the only thing that made sense in the moment. He tossed himself off the porch, into his car and kicked the thing into first. Flinging pebbles off city-worn rubber as he slammed his fist into the steering wheel with a curse that carried in the early morning air.

He smoked his way through a pack and then some after he called in sick to work and barricaded himself in his trailer. Figuring that if anything it would save Joyce the bullets whenever she decided to take him out back and shoot him.

But he couldn't escape from the scent. Hating himself for being hard under the wrinkled tan of his trousers before he full-on *stripped* in the middle of the kitchen and tossed everything he'd been wearing clear out the window – already half mad on the smell alone. Scrubbing his skin raw in the shower between sips of warm beer. Ignoring the insistent throb of his cock as he leaned into the spray until it went ice-cold. Ignoring the sting against his shoulders as the Sentinel in him demanded he go back and collect his Guide. Churning and coiling under his skin as something in his gut tightened. Gearing up for what was going to come next without his consent as his skin burned over-warm and clammy.

Because that was the thing-

Jonathan was his.

His Guide.

And honestly, nothing about that was right or even fair. He could write a book about all the ways this wasn't going to work and that there had to be some sort of mistake. But even he couldn't ignore the truth of it forever. And the frightening part was that even he had limits. He'd been without a Guide – needy, empty, wandering - for so long it was only a matter of time before instinct overruled common sense.

The point was, save for offing himself, he didn't see a way out of this that didn't involve-

He stiffened, hand slamming down on the shower knob just a bit too hard when his phone started ringing. Filling the surrounding air with a shrill monotone that set his teeth on edge. He knocked back the last of his beer as he stepped out of the stall. Trailing water across the shitty carpet as he tore the phone out of the wall as he passed. Lighting up another cigarette as he tugged on a pair of jeans and stepped out on his deck overlooking the lake.

He'd been around the block enough to know what happened next. More to the point, he'd seen what happened when a Sentinel and a Guide were kept apart. It wasn't pretty. And yeah, he figured it *did* make him all sorts of an asshole for running. But the alternative would'a been seizing him up and tucking his nose into the butter soft of Jonathan's neck. Breathing him in like he was the best form of oxygen there was. It would've meant slamming him up against a wall as the kid's towel dropped to his ankles. Hiking his ass up until Jonathan's legs had no other choice but to wrap around his waist. Attacking lips and growling into the awkward, hungry rut of his Guide's hips, all right in front of his god damned mother. It would've meant-

The bite of familiar tires, still three or so miles away, raised the hairs on the back of his neck.

Jonathan.

For a brief moment he actually considered running. Taking his time as he stubbed out his cigarette and flicked it off the railing. Wondering exactly where the Sentinel left off and he began as he inhaled throatily. Growling pleased and impatient as the smell of his Guide moving closer swiftly took its toll on his self-control.

He never thought this would be him.

Not even close.

The fact that it was Jonathan, out everyone, was another matter entirely.

The shirt he threw on when the car pulled up to a stop in front of his house was an after thought more than anything. Less a strive for any fading hope of dignity and more about trying not to seem as vulnerable as he really felt as he stared at the door with open apprehension.

Only thing was- Jonathan didn't knock.

Instead, the kid stopped when he got to the front porch. Hands stuffed in his pockets, collar turned up and scowling small into the dry-eye wind like he'd regressed back to his old high school mask in less than three hours flat. Determined to wait him out like he already had this part figured. Knowing he heard him coming. Knowing that every single inch of him would be tuned in automatically. Keeping track of everything he was doing. Every movement, every scent, every inhale, the hum of his heartbeat. *All of it.*

To a Sentinel their Guide was like an open book. Nothing was too small to be discounted or ignored. Everything was worthy of attention. Imprinting and memorizing their Guide all the way down to the cellular level. Knowing them in a way only a Sentinel could. Knowing them so they could *always* find them. No matter what.

His lip curled, heady with want and self-loathing as the wood banister creaked as Jonathan leaned up against it. Coughing slightly – a mixture of the cold and second-hand smoke – as the car pinged with micro-fractures of groaning sound as it cooled down in the uneven gravel a couple yards away.

He was too damn old to be playing these types of fuckin' games.

"Go away, kid," he grunted, raising his voice enough that it would carry through the shitty ply-wood. "This is the last place you should be right about now"

"Funny," Jonathan shot back through the door, able to pick up every fuckin' part of the frustrated cheek the kid was all but drowning in. Not sure what to make of the *reassurance-acceptance-calm* that seemed to be hazing through the door like it wasn't a barrier at all. But there was also *Jonathan* in there as well – lurking in the backdrop in that understated way he had. Making it better and worse all at the same

time. Because it wasn't just good vibes passing from Guide to Sentinel, the kid was actually trying to soothe *him* after his life had just gotten turned upside down even worse than him. Future poised in the god damn balance and everything. "I have a feeling this is exactly where I'm supposed to be."

Christ.

The kid hadn't even finished university for god's sake!

He didn't know there was a bottom lower than rock to reach, but he'd sure as shit just found it.

"You can't stay inside forever," Jonathan said after an awkward collection of beats. Dangerously close to tempting fate as he bit down on the urge to fling it back like a challenge and just chain-smoke in his living room until either the smoke detector went or someone from the station came callin'. Wondering if he was dead or just passed out somewhere after too much drinkin'. *Again.*

He sighed. Because honestly the situation called for it.

"This isn't a good idea," he told him, not entirely surprised to find his hand on the knob anyway. Muscles so tense they burned as Sentinel and man duked it out underneath his skin. Part of him wanting to save the kid from everything about this – *from him* – while the other part wanted nothing more than to seize him up and *glut* himself full. To make him his in the oldest way possible. To-

"Let me in," Jonathan said again. Like it was that fucking simple.

"Why?"

It was an honest question. He hadn't meant to say it out loud, but there it was. Rubbing his hands down his face as the sensation of his nails rasping through couple day old stubble threatened to make him wince. Senses edgy as the kid took a deep breath from the other side of the door. Scenting determination, want and yeah- even uncertainty as he wondered if this moment was going to be one of those ones people tell you that you'll remember for a lifetime.

For a single, stuttered moment – just before the words started – he

found himself blinking through the double image of the kid sitting next to Nancy Wheeler at the station. Bruised, young and pissed to hell as he stood up to him like-

"Because I want you to. *I need you to*. I think you've been keeping things all closed up for a long time and you know it. And I think you know it's time that changed. It doesn't have to be like that anymore. Not for you. Not for me. Not for us. Besides, if you don't, I'll just sit out here until my Mom comes and beats the stuffing out of you for making me sit out in the cold and honestly- I think she's in enough of a mood right now to make it a whoopin' we'll both remember."

He opened the door.

And maybe more than a few other things, if he was being honest.

Author's Note:

Reference:

illecebrous: (adj.) enticing.